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the only one stationary portion of the flap so as to remain at rest during an exhalation and having a second segment that is associated with the only one free portion of the flexible flap so as to be lifted away from the seal surface during an exhalation, the second segment of the circumferential edge also being located below the first segment when the filtering face mask is worn on a person, the flexible flap being mounted to the valve seat such that the one free portion of the flap exhibits a curvature when viewed from the side in the closed position and is pressed towards the seal surface in an abutting relationship with it, under any orientation of the exhalation valve, when a fluid is not passing through the orifice.

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45. The filtering face mask of claim 41, wherein the opening in valve cover is positioned directly in the path of fluid flow approximately parallel to the path traced by the second segment of the circumferential edge during opening and closing of the free portion of the flexible flap.

Please cancel claims 38-49, and 54.

Please add the following claims 69-72 to this application:

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69. The filtering face mask of claim 36, wherein the flap-retaining surface is not disposed substantially in the path of the exhale flow stream.

70. The filtering face mask of claim 33, wherein the orifice includes a plurality of openings, which plurality of openings are disposed within the orifice beneath the point where the flexible flap is mounted to the valve seat when viewing the filtering face mask from the front in an upright position.

71. The filtering face mask of claim 70, wherein the exhaled air passes primarily through a plurality of openings during an exhalation.

72. The filtering face mask of claim 71, wherein the valve seat includes a flap-retaining surface that is located outside the region defined by the plurality of openings.